

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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R 261613Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7515

USUN NEW YORK 1361

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 07338

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: UN, PINR, PDIP, BY, BE, US

SUBJECT: NEW BURUNDI AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES

REF: BUJUMBURA 459

1. LAURENT NZEYIMANA, BURUNDI AMBASSADOR TO BELGIUM, NETHERLANDS, U.K. AND COMMON MARKET AND AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO UNITED STATES, MADE FAREWELL CALL JULY 26. AMBASSADOR NZEYIMANA TOLD ME HE WILL RETURN TO BUJUMBURA THIS WEEK FOR CONSULTATION AND HOME LEAVE AND PLANS TO ARRIVE IN WASHINGTON AROUND AUGUST 20TH. HE EMPHASIZED THAT HIS MISSION IN WASHINGTON WOULD BE TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE THE GOOD RELATIONS THAT EXIST BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND BURUNDI. AS AN EXAMPLE, HE SAID THAT THE JOB OF AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON USED TO INCLUDE THE ADDED RESPONSIBILITY OF PERMREP TO THE UN; THIS IS NOW NO LONGER THE CASE AND HE WILL BE ABLE TO DEVOTE FULL TIME TO U.S. RELATIONS. AMBASSADOR NZEYIMAN IS ATTRACTIVE, INTELLIGENT AND FRIENDLY; HE SPEAKS ENGLISH HALTINGLY BUT IS CONTINUING HIS STUDY OF THE LANGUAGE. HE ASKED FOR INFORMATION AND EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT WASHINGTON SCHOOLING FOR HIS FOUR CHILDREN: HE IS THINKING ABOUT PUTTING THE TWO ELDEST IN FRENCH-SPEAKING SECONDARY SCHOOL AND PERHAPS TRYING THE TWO YOUNGEST, AGE 8 AND '10, IN AMERICAN SCHOOLS.

2. BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY'S BURUNDI DESK OFFICER (JAENEN) GAVE US FOLLOWING BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
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ON AMBASSADOR NZEYIMANA: HE IS VERY WELL-EDUCATED AND

FRIENDLY TO BELGIUM AND WEST IN GENERAL. HE
IS MEMBER OF RULING TUTSI ETHNIC GROUP BUT IS
CONSIDERED BY BELGIUM AS A MODERATE RE TUTSI-HUTU
ETHNIC FEUD. HE IS CLOSE TO PRESIDENT MICOMBERO
AND THIS REPORTEDLY SAVED HIM FROM BEING SACKED
BY TUTSI HARLINERS FOLLOWING 1972 TRIBAL CONFLICT.
JAENEN EMPHASIZED THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY VIEWED
AMBASSADOR'S TRANSFER TO WASHINGTON AS IF NOT A
PROMOTION AT LEAST A LATERAL MOVE OF EQUAL RANK
(PARA 4 REFTTEL); HE REASONED THAT AMBASSADOR HAD BEEN
IN BRUSSELS FOR OVER SEVEN YEARS AND "CAN'T STAY
HERE FOREVER." JAENEN SAID THAT AMBASSADOR IS
MARRIED TO CHARMING, OVERWEIGHT WOMAN, WHO IS MEMBER
OF IMPORTANT TUTSI FAMILY AND WHO ATTENDS DIPLOMATIC
RECEPTIONS DRESSED IN TRADITIONAL BURUNDI GARB.FIRESTONE

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